30th Congress, 1st Session. [SENATE.] Executive, No. 53.

MESSAGE

FROM THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

COMMUNICATING

The correspondence (not heretofore communicated) of the United States minister at Paris, since the recent change in the government of France.

JUNE 12, 1848.

Read, and ordered to be printed, and that 5,000 additional copies be printed for the use of the Senate.

To the Senate of the United States:

I communicate, herewith, a report of the Secretary of State, together with accompanying documents, in compliance with the resolution of the Senate of the 31st ultimo, requesting the President to communicate "the correspondence (not heretofore communicated) between the Secretary of State and the minister of the United States at Paris, since the recent change in the government of France."

JAMES K. POLK.

WASHINGTON, *June* 12, 1848.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, June 8, 1848.

The Secretary of State, to whom has been referred a resolution of the Senate of the 31st ultimo, in which the President is requested to communicate to that body "the correspondence (not heretofore communicated) between the Secretary of State and the minister of the United States at Paris, since the recent change in the government of France: *Provided*, That, in the opinion of the President, the same may be done without injury to the public interest," has the honor to lay before him a copy of the papers called for by the resolution.

All which is respectfully submitted.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

To the PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

List of accompanying papers.

Mr. Rush to Mr. Buchanan, February 24, 1848.
Mr. Rush to Mr. Buchanan, March 14, 1848.
Mr. Rush to Mr. Buchanan, March 29, 1848.
Mr. Buchanan to Mr. Rush, March 31, 1848.
Mr. Buchanan to Mr. Rush, April 6, 1848.
Mr. Rush to Mr. Buchanan, April 18, 1848.
Mr. Rush to Mr. Buchanan, (two enclosures) April 27, 1848.
Mr. Rush to Mr. Buchanan, May 10, 1848.

Mr. Rush to Mr. Buchanan.

[No. 16.] LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
Paris, February 24, 1848—11 o'clock, a. m.

SIR: I put off writing until the last hour for the steamer that leaves Liverpool the day after to-morrow, in the hope of giving you, in a few lines, the most recent information of the important events in progress here.

In consequence of the sudden determination of the government, as announced in the Chamber of Deputies by the minister of the interior, on the 22d instant, to prevent the reform banquet, which was to have been held on that day for the 12th arrondissement of Paris, by the opposition members of the chamber and others, a state of things has been produced little short of revolutionary.

Troops being called out to enforce the interdict, collisions and bloodshed have followed, for an account of which I can only refer to the journals of yesterday and this morning, referring to them also for what has passed officially in the Chamber of Deputies, on the resignation of the ministers.

My object in writing at this moment is simply to state what has transpired, as far as I can ascertain, since the morning papers came out.

The number of the people killed last night, particularly by the fire from the troops stationed around the residence of the minister of foreign affairs, part of which scene Mr. Martin witnessed, increased the exasperation of the former, and swelled their numbers, already formidable, in the work of opposition and violence against the government.

The troops of the line fire reluctantly upon the people, or refuse to fire at all. The ational guards interpose, though without force as yet, striving to prevent them from firing. The people and boys even take the horses from the artillery, some mounting upon the cannon, whilst others drag it along.

In this state of things, the new ministry, under Count Molé, a conjectural list of which the morning papers give, has disappeared, and a paper is now being read at different places in the streets by General Lamoriciere, on the part of the king, to the effect that he has sent for Odillon Barrot to form a new ministry. This deputy

is, perhaps, the most violent of the opposition members, and supposed to have been the least acceptable of any to the king.

The general confusion is still great, and results full of uncertainty. Even now, when I am closing this communication, lest it should be out of time, cavalry are hastily passing through streets within my hearing, and my servants bring in rumors that the king has abdicated, and that the Count de Paris is proclaimed. I have no present means of ascertaining if they be true or not, but will watch events and endeavor to report them with all care; having the honor in the meantime to remain, with great respect, your obedient servant,

RICHARD RUSH.

The Hon. JAMES BUCHANAN,
Secretary of State.

Mr. Buchanan to Mr. Rush.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, March 31, 1848.

SIR: I received, last evening, your despatch of the 4th instant, No. 17, containing a sketch of the progress of the French revolution, and of the course which you have adopted towards the provisional government. I am happy to inform you that the President cordially approves your conduct. It was right and proper that the envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary from the United States should be the first to recognize, so far as his powers extended, the provisional government of the French republic. Indeed, had the representative of any other nation preceded you in this good work it would have been regretted by the President. Your speech on the 28th ultimo, at the Hotel de Ville, to the members of the provisional government, was eminently judicious. Whilst it truly expressed the feelings of the President and people of the United States for the success of the new republic, it did not omit our cherished policy of "leaving to other nations the choice of their own forms" of government.

I transmit to you, herewith, a letter of credence from the President to the French republic. You are also furnished with a copy of this letter, which you will communicate to the minister of foreign affairs, on asking an audience for the purpose of delivering the original to the chief executive authority in France. At this audience you will make such remarks as may be dictated by your own good judgment and discretion, and by your knowledge of the lively interest which the President feels in the prosperity and stability of the French republic.

In its intercourse with foreign nations, the government of the United States has, from its origin, always recognized *de facto* governments. We recognize the right of all nations to create and reform their political institutions, according to their own will and pleasure. We do not go behind the existing government to in-

volve ourselves in the question of legitimacy. It is sufficient for us to know that a government exists, capable of maintaining itself; and then its recognition on our part inevitably follows. This principle of action, resulting from our sacred regard for the independence of nations, has occasioned some strange anomalies in our history. The pope, the emperor of Russia, and President Jackson, were the only authorities on earth which ever recognized Don Miguel as king of Portugal.

Whilst this is our settled policy, it does not follow that we can ever be indifferent spectators to the progress of liberty throughout the world, and especially in France. We can never forget the obligations which we owe to that generous nation for their aid, at the darkest period of our revolutionary war, in achieving our own independence. These obligations have been transmitted from father to son, from generation to generation, and are still gratefully remembered. They yet live freshly in the hearts of our countrymen. It was, therefore, with one universal burst of enthusiasm that the American people hailed the late glorious revolution in France, in favor of liberty and republican government In this feeling the President strongly sympathizes. Warm aspirations for the success of the new republic are breathed from every heart. Liberty and order will make France happy and prosperous, and her destinies, under providence, are now in the hands of the French people. Let them by their wisdom, firmness, and moderation refute the slanders of their enemies, and convince the world that they are capable of self-government.

In our exultation, however, we cannot forget that republican France will have to contend with many difficulties. Among the chief of these, is the danger that she may be involved in war with the monarchical powers of Europe. This she ought to avoid by every honorable means; and I am happy to believe that such will be the policy of the French government, from the note of Mr. Lamartine to yourself, of the 27th ultimo, in which he eloquently observes that "the principle of peace, and the principle of liberty, were born on the same day in France." By abstaining from all aggressive movements, France will probably be able to perfect her republican institutions in peace. It can scarcely be conceived that any nation would commence hostilities against her, simply because within her own limits she has abolished monarchy, and established a republic.

It has been the policy of our government from its origin never to interfere in the domestic concerns of other nations, and experience has demonstrated the wisdom of this policy. In this respect, France may profit by our example. If war must come, she ought carefully to avoid even the appearance of being the aggressor. Should she then be attacked by the monarchical powers of Europe for adopting a republican government, this would be an outrage on her rights as an independent nation. It would be an attempt to punish the French people for having chosen that form of government which they deemed best calculated to promote their own happiness, and to force upon them a monarchy by foreign bay-

onets. Such an invasion of their most sacred rights would be condemned by all just and wise men in every nation, and would be reprobated by an irresistible public opinion throughout the world.

If the new republic can preserve peace with honor, it will avoid the many dangers to liberty which must always follow in the train of war. In a conflict with the great powers of Europe, France would be compelled to put forth all her energies. She must increase her armies to the highest war standard, and may have to maintain them in the field for years. The sympathy of common dangers and the glory of common victories, throughout a long and successful struggle, are calculated to excite feelings of enthusiastic attachment in armies towards their triumphant commander. Under such circumstances, the history of the world proves that soldiers are too prone to forget their country in admiration for their leader. From Cæsar to Cromwell, and from Cromwell to Napoleon, all powerful republics have been destroyed by successful generals, fresh from the fields of their glory. It would be most lamentable, indeed, should the new republic split upon this rock. In that event, the very means which she had adopted to defend her liberties against the foreigner might be employed to establish a military despotism at home. Such a catastrophe would probably, for many years, arrest the progress of constitutional freedom throughout Europe.

Even with a view to the extension of human liberty and free government throughout the world, France can do more by her peaceful example than she could accomplish, powerful as she is, by the sword. The example of a great and enlightened nation, in the midst of Europe, prosperous and happy in the enjoyment of constitutional freedom, could not fail to produce an irresistible influence in ameliorating the political condition of neighboring nations. Free institutions are in their very nature progressive; and, if permitted to extend themselves by their own intrinsic power and excellence, they must gradually and surely pervade the civilized world. The people of each independent nation will then decide for themselves what degree of liberty is best adapted to their condition without the forcible intervention of other nations. If France can maintain peace with honor, a general war in Europe, between opposite and contending principles, will be avoided; and the cause of the human race will not be staked upon the result of a few great battles, nor be decided by mere brute force.

I shall mention another difficulty which might possibly interfere with the final success of the French revolution, but which, I hope, may be overcome. It will, I think, be seriously doubted by every philosophical observer of the working of our institutions whether, if the State governments were abolished, a central republican government could long be maintained even in this country. These State governments are the citadels of liberty, and the watchful guardians of the rights of the people against the encroachments of federal power. Even if it were possible that the federal government could, by any sudden convulsion, be overthrown, the State governments would still remain in full force and vigor, affording

protection to the lives, the liberty and the property of their citizens. These sovereignties are the main pillars in our political edifice, and whilst they stand firm, the federal government, which is a constitutional emanation from them, cannot be seriously shaken. And yet it was deemed necessary to guard against the danger of any forcible interference, by excited multitudes, with the high duties of the President and Congress; and for this reason Washington opposed the establishment of the seat of the federal government in any of our large cities.

The history of the former French revolution has, I think, rendered doubtful the stability of any purely central republican government in France. When such a government is overthrown at the capital, all is lost. There never have been any other organized governments in reserve throughout the provinces, similar to those in the United States, to which the people could resort, and around which they could rally. A revolution in Paris has always decided the fate of France. State governments, or some substitute for them, would, therefore, seem to be advisable, for the protection and security of constitutional liberty in the French republic, composed as it is of thirty-five millions of people.

If the ancient provinces of France were still in existence, State governments might be easily established. Each of them had laws and customs peculiar to themselves; and their inhabitants were denominated Normans, Bretons, Gascons, &c., just as our people are called Pennsylvanians, Virginians, or Kentuckians. But these provinces have been long since abolished, and France is now composed of eighty-six departments. Why may not the whole territory of France be divided into a convenient number of States, grouping together, for this purpose, those departments whose geographical position, peculiar interests and local feelings, would render their population homogeneous? Governments, similar to our State governments, might then be established in each of these divisions. I acknowledge that the task would be difficult; but yet, if undertaken with the zeal, energy and ability which characterize Frenchmen, it can be accomplished. The security and permanence of constitutional liberty in France may possibly depend upon the establishment of such State governments. On this subject I speak with some diffidence, and give you merely my impressions. I know that centralism would add strength to the executive power, and render it more formidable to the enemies of France; but, at the same time, there is some reason to apprehend that the adoption of this system might endanger both the liberty and the stability of the republic.

I have ventured upon these speculations because it is certain that, in your intercourse with the authorities of the new republic, you will be often called upon in conversation for information respecting our political system, State and national, which they seem to have adopted as their model, and also for your opinion how far this system ought to be changed or modified so as best to adapt it to the peculiar position of the French republic. Your intimate and enlightened knowledge of our government, both theoretically and

practically, will enable you to impart much valuable information and advice to the French authorities.

The President and people of the United States anxiously desire that the French republic may be firmly established, and may secure the blessings of liberty and free government to millions of Frenchmen yet unborn. Whilst we hope much and believe much, we still feel that anxiety for the result, which is inseparable from the human mind, whilst any doubt remains concerning the accomplishment of a great object, in which we feel the most profound interest. You will not fail, therefore, to advise us regularly by every steamer of the progress of events in France.

I am, sir, respectfully, your obedient servant,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

Richard Rush, Esq., &c., &c., &c.

P. S.—The establishment of a republic in France may, I trust, prove favorable to the removal of unwise restrictions in the trade between the two countries, and to a commercial arrangement which would be equally beneficial to the people of both. I shall, ere long, address you on this subject. In the meantime you might adopt means to ascertain what would be the prospect of success.

Mr. Rush to Mr. Buchanan.

[No. 20.] Legation of the United States,
Paris, March 29, 1848.

Sir: This great nation continues to maintain her new position in a manner to keep up the hopes of the friends of national liberty, who anxiously watch her course, and strive to watch it dispassionately. No tumults have occurred in Paris since I last wrote to you—no open breaches of the law of any kind.

The continued gatherings in the streets a few days after my number 18, ominous as at first they appeared, were peaceable in their objects and means. They contemplated the preservation of order, not its interruption. An important principle depended upon them. The national guards, existing under the late government, were not pleased with a reorganization of their body, which made, as they alleged, inconvenient changes upon their former usages, and for a short time it was feared that there would be trouble. The provisional government having decided the changes to be necessary, in consequence of an augmentation of the body from about sixty-two thousand to one hundred and ninety thousand, the great increase arising from enrolling classes below the middle classes, to which latter the guards had chiefly been confined before, adhered to the changes. Excitement was created, placards posted up, but no violence committed or attempted. In the end, the people, workmen most of them, and supposed to be scarcely fewer than two hundred and in number, were formed into bodies, and went to the

Hotel de Ville unarmed, the design being to give the sanction of their presence to this act of authority in the provisional government. It answered the purpose, and all is now quiet again on this score, and seems likely to remain so.

The shock, almost as universal as instantaneous to the government and thrones of Europe, including even Austria, as soon as the news of what happened in France reached them, has had its natural effect in assuring France that she is not likely at present to be attacked from without. This leaves her more exclusively the command of her time and means for the work she has to do at home. Amidst the inevitable destruction that befell all her previous establishments of government, as well as trade and credit, when the revolution struck her, arduous and complicated must be the work she has on hand, and that she may now so reasonably count upon being unmolested while engaged in it all, is felt by every body to be a gain to her cause.

The eloquent manifesto of Mr. Lamartine declared that France, as a republic, did not desire to enter the family of nations as a disturbing phenomenon of European order; that war was not her principle, but peace; and that the republic was only the intellectual ally of nations desiring to live by the same principle as its own. It was in vivid language, it also said, that the republic aimed not at "setting the world on fire, but only to shine from its place on the horizon of nations."

I recall words so memorable, proclaimed to Europe only on the second of March, for the just opportunity of adding, that if the nations within whose borders the bare knowledge of the French revolution produced such shocks, will be as orderly as France, the great movement may be of auspicious promise through the world. Never in all time could a people have been more exempt from any reprehensible violence, or crime, or public disorder in any way, under boundless facilities for committing them all, than the French people since the day, now a month past, when their indomitable courage attacked and overthrew their well armed, rich, and powerful monarchy. Everything here stamps this as a truth. It belongs already to history. The roused passions with which they annihilated the monarchy, seem to have subsided as soon as the battle was won; nor would they touch its glittering fragments everywhere strewed before their eyes. Instantly their energy took new and generous directions; healing, saving, magnanimous. Their own example now therefore stands up before them to keep them in the path they have entered. It is a proud example to them, brief though as yet it be. It is a great civic victory already achieved, that the first month of this mighty revolution should have gone by as it has; with so much of moderation, so much of forbearance; such an honorable, noble spirit of conservatism in the masses, when the laws were silent. The friends of equal rights and just reform in all governments, will desire to hail this great fact as the first instalment of a bond now paid by France for her safety and success in the trials she has yet to go through. It is beginning to allay fears that would start up with reminiscences

of the old revolution of '89, when she before broke upon the world as a republic. It is already showing, to the extent of this her own living example, how changed are her people, how opposite in conduct from that period. Burke himself, if on the stage again, would see up to this point the completeness of the contrast; and, as the triumph of peaceful virtues during this first eventful month of their present revolution has been so signal, the hope grows more and more encouraging that they will not be found wanting when they come to the momentous task of building up, upon the ruins of their monarchy, the essential institutions for the new form of government they have proclaimed.

Mr. Lamartine's manifesto radiated through surrounding nations in this hemisphere. Yesterday, again, his expression in a public address to the Italians, that "the want of the age is a European Washington," has struck upon the hearts of Americans, who, sensible to this homage to the founder of their country, also feel that France now covers with her great name, and its ages of renown, the name and the principle of a republic.

The election for members of the national assembly has been postponed until the 23d of April, and the meeting of the assembly until the 4th of May. The experiment of universal suffrage will be made under better cirumstances than, for a time, many feared would be the case. Very soon after the formation of the provisional government, instructions were issued from the department of the minister of the interior to the proper officers in the provinces, for the mode of conducting the elections. On becoming known, they were thought by the public essentially to interfere with the free exercise of the great franchise of voting. The press spoke out against them with a voice nearly universal; and it was a good indication of a right judgment in this community, as well as right spirit in its temporary government, that the objectionable parts of the instructions which, it appeared, moreover, had not been deliberately sanctioned or designed, were modified or rescinded. Public confidence on this great head was thus restored.

The finances are still the source of heaviest embarrassment to the new government and whole country. There is too great a probability of this continuing to weigh upon both, until time and events shall have brought about some, at least, of the reassurances that mark stability in public affairs. The bank of France suspended specie payments a day or two after I last wrote. The measure was anticipated from the first. It is the less likely to be disastrous in any of its ultimate effects in this country from the abundance of its metallic currency, which only hides itself temporarily; but it is injurious in a high degree to important business transaction in its immediate effects. The loan of one hundred millions of francs finds but little favor, and does not go off well. To aid the public and private wants, the provisional government decreed the establishment of a national discount bank for Paris, with a capital of twenty millions of francs, on the basis of individuals subscribing one-third of the amount, Paris one-third, and the national treasury the remaining third. It also decreed that banks on the same

principle should be formed for all the principal manufacturing and commercial towns, with a capital adapted to the wants of each locality. These banks, it is understood, give fair promise, for the most part, of coming into useful operation.

Measures have been adopted for employing in the national workshops workmen thrown out of their usual channels of employment, and other steps of a temporary nature been taken for relieving the present necessities of this very large class, under the derangement of the times.

To appreciate the financial difficulties, it should be remembered that a great feature in the policy of the late regal government was to magnify the middle and commercial classes, the crown having had no aristocracy (none in effect) for its support. Whatever improvident expenditures may, therefore, be charged upon the king or his ministers, or however lavish they may have been, it is nevertheless true that the interests of those classes, through peace and industry, were flourishing. There could scarcely be better evidence of this, as one item, than that, whilst the imports into France from England, small in the long run, were less than five hundred thousand pounds sterling in value, in 1835, they had grown, in 1845, to the large sum, within a fraction, of two millions eight hundred thousand pounds. The revolution found the systems of credit, always coexisting with a flourishing state of these classes, better established in France than usual; and as a revolution, like war, paralyze all these systems, however they may ultimately revive and improve, this country is now suffering under their extension and severe depression.

The other immediate injuries to credit and commerce, I regret to be forced to add, as known to me through correspondence with our consul at Havre, that our ships arriving at that port since the revolution have come to a market almost totally prostrated, and that large present if not eventual losses to our merchants in that trade have therefore become too probable.

The direct taxes have been increased by an addition to them of forty five per cent. for the present year. This it is computed will yield one hundred and ninety millions of francs. That the whole amount of the taxes will be paid, original and cumulative, is doubted by none. They will flow from the solid ability and undrawn riches of France. The general punctuality of her producing and working classes in fulfilling their pecuniary obligations, will be seconded at the present juncture by voluntary zeal towards the State, a tendency in her people which has been signally illustrated at exciting periods of her history. This feeling, properly nurtured and directed, becomes financial power. Already it has been showing itself in a variety of ways.

Workmen are on all sides giving up a day's work in the week as an offering to the State. The extent to which it has been done is very great, and it still goes on.

Peasants in the country are giving up their silver forks, spoons, and very heir-looms to the public service.

Bankers in the towns have come forward with liberal donations, side by side with other private individuals.

Admirals in the navy have renounced portions of their pay or emoluments.

Even milliners and needle women, the worst paid of all here as everywhere, desire that a portion of their hard earnings should be received by the republic. The foregoing are but samples.

Every practical judgment knows that the sum of all such oblations can go but a very little way towards meeting the wants of a great nation in straits. But the fervor and devotion of French feeling which they are beginning to indicate in the cause of the republic is full of significance. It points to what the financial power of the nation may become under the incitements of a roused moral power brought to act upon her vast and slumbering resources.

Having refrained in my last from mentioning the names of the members of the provisional cabinet, owing to changes then believed to be at hand, I beg leave now to give a list of them, accurate to the present time, viz:

M. Dupont, (de l'Eure,) president of the council, without portfolio; M. de Lamartine, minister of foreign affairs; M. Crémieux, minister of justice; M. Arago, minister of marine; General Cavaignac, minister of war; M. Ledru Rollin, minister of the interior; M. Carnot, minister of public instruction; M. Bethmont, minister of commerce and agriculture; M. Garnier Pages, minister of finance; M. Marie, minister of public works.

When decrees are issued by the provisional government, the names of one or more of the secretaries of the government are sometimes appended, but they hold no cabinet appointments.

I have the honor to remain, with great respect, your obedient servant,

RICHARD RUSH.

The Hon. JAMES BUCHANAN,
Secretary of State.

March 31.—It would seem that General Cavaignac's acceptance of the war department is uncertain. He had been sent as successor to the Duke d'Aumale in the governorship of Algeria, and has not returned.

R. R.

Mr. Rush to Mr. Buchanan.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
Paris, March 14, 1848.

SIR: The revolution up to this date has continued to move on with a degree of order that may be pronounced wonderful, considering its suddennes, and that it led to the present annihilation of the monarchy, and all belonging to it, substance and form,

throne, titles, offices, appendages, everything. Whilst I now write, there could not be more tranquility in Washington, Philadelphia, or New York, than in Paris; or than there has been since I wrote my last despatch. This is a good augury, whatever the causes, temporary or permanent, which have so soon produced such a calm after such a storm. The spectacle is imposing and instructive. It is calculated to awaken admiration for many of the characteristics of this people, so brave and so excitable, and yet, as a whole, so tractable, so obedient, when all restraints of law were removed or relaxed.

I should be disposed to rank as among the more immediate causes for this quick transition of Paris from a battle field to good order, the energy, ability, and extraordinary industry with which the provisional government has acted in emergencies, than which none in human affairs could have been more trying. If the throne was destroyed and royal family expelled from the palace with the suddenness of a thunderbolt, it was with like suddenness that the new government was called upon to act. It had to re-organize every thing and do it instantly. It had to gather up and form anew the fragments of the governing power scattered to the winds in every direction. Every conceivable part of the public service was brought to a stand. From the centre to the extremities, in the provinces as in the capital, in all official spheres, primary and subordinate, civil and military, authority had fallen to the ground.

The most pressing of all fresh difficulties was, to know what to do with thousands upon thousands of the working people thrown out of employment by such a revolution, and in danger of falling upon society, hungry and maddened by the scenes of blood through which they had just passed. Bands of this description, increasing hourly, roamed through the streets with arms still in their hands, and too likely to gather strength from the junction of criminals and desperadoes escaping from the jails, or otherwise starting up in the general confusion. Herculean indeed were the tasks which the provisional government had on hand; and making every just allowance for a crisis so portentous, firmly and successfully in most things have they hitherto performed them.

The first act was to put food in the mouths of those who could not possibly earn it for themselves under the prostration of all regular industry. This was done by a decree of the provisional government, requiring the bakers of Paris to place one-fifth of their bread at the disposal of the new public authorities, for the use of the armed citizens. The decree was followed up by another, guaranteeing immediate work to the working classes, and awarding to them the million of francs falling in from the civil list. A further decree ordered a commission to be formed with the special object of occupying itself with the condition of the working classes, with a view to all possible meliorations of their condition. The question was not one of regulating permanently by government, what government can never do permanently, but only of supplying actual wants not to be reasoned with. It was a season when

the apparent rashness of measures was a necessity, and even became wise under inexorable circumstances.

Another of the early soothing measures of the provisional government was, to declare that the children of the citizens killed in the streets were adopted by the nation.

The new government went on by its decrees and proclamations to enforce obedience to the laws, illustrating the paramount obligation in terms that told upon the judgments and hearts of all. It reinstated the civil magistracy in all branches, with only the exceptions become inevitable. It appealed to the army, to the navy, to the national guard. The last it reconstructed in some important particulars which the great change demanded. All the old functionaries and bureaux, civil and military, gave in their adhesions with sufficient promptitude to the new authority of the nation, or, if with exceptions, only unimportant ones; and it has been the same in the provinces as in the metropolis. Nor have the clergy been found wanting, as seen in their ready obedience to the call upon them by the archbishop of Paris, to place the colors of the republic in the churches, as in other testimonials of their concurrence.

Besides, its first steps in fields admitting of no delay, the provisional government has already signalized itself by others in harmony with the growing intelligence and humanity of mankind, illustrating in this the liberal tendencies of enlightened republicanism.

It has, for example, removed from the press in France the remaining shackles and restrictions that weighed upon it.

It has abolished imprisonment for debt; the decree upon this subject being retrospective.

It has annulled all condemnations for political offences, and those relating to the press.

More important than all, it has abolished the punishment of death for all political offences, thereby, besides the general beneficence of the decree, throwing its special shield over the late ministers, and showing to the world that, whatever the errors imputed to them, vengeace is not to stain the acts of the revolution. These are good earnests at the outset of elevated maxims in policy and legislation.

It is not to be concealed that financial difficulties are the ones most likely to press most heavily in this, as in all great revolutions at the early stages. Stocks are sure to fall, and capital hides itself under first alarms and distrust. The provisional government has candidly avowed these difficulties in a full report made by Garnier Pages, provisional minister of finance, in a report which all the newspapers give. The picture it presents of the improvident and wasteful expenditures of the late government is vivid; but being drawn by those in habits of anterior opposition, and now triumphant, it may be that some abatement should be made. By the concurring voices of all France, for the predominating periods of the government overthrown, was prosperous in her material interests; and whilst her debt has been increased by money borrowed and laid out on public works on a large scale, still in course of

construction throughout the country, (without here including the great outlay for fortifications round Paris,) the prospective effects of those works upon the national prosperity and wealth, has naturally no place in an exposition, forced to deal with present wants, and the absolute necessity of providing for them. To this end a loan of one hundred millions of francs, still uncalled for under a law of last summer, as referred to in my No. 8, in November, has been authorized, also, the selling of the forests, lands and farms, which belonged to the old civil list, and the selling of the crown jewels, with other financial resorts, into a detail of which I need not go, immature as they yet unavoidably must be. The existing taxes are all, for the present, to be levied as heretofore; and the provisional government has urged their payment in advance for the current year, which, it is believed, will be the case, to an extent not inconsiderable. The solid and inexhaustible sources of wealth in France are known to the world, in their thousand manifestations of utility and grandeur. The deep foundations of it are in her soil, and the energy, activity, ingenuity, and careful pecuniary habits of her people. These leave little room for fears of her ultimate financial power, when the derangements, inevitable to the struggle she is passing through, shall have been surmounted; and especially when it may also not unreasonably be supposed that her trade and commerce, at home and abroad, breaking loose from monopolies that have for ages chained or restricted it, will go forward immeasureably under the freer systems she may hope for from the republic. After all, the debt, carried up to the highest pitch, and however injudiciously increased by the late government, is but about a fourth part as large as the debt of England, namely, a fraction over two hundred millions, in pounds sterling.

The public anxiety is more and more rivetting itself upon the approaching convocation of the national assembly, for giving a constitutional government to the republic. The elections open on the 9th of April. On the 20th of that month the assembly is to meet in Paris. Its numbers are to be nine hundred, including as part of the constituent body, Algeria, that drain upon the late regal treasury; whether to be continued or not, time will show. Suffrage to be universal, and by ballot; the voter to be twenty-one years of age; the representative, twenty-five. The thoughts, hopes and anxieties of all will be concentrated in this great assembly. That its majority will be large and decided for the republican form, all indications declare; and, at present, there are none who doubt it. For the rest, its convocation is too near; its objects too vast; its duties too momentous, to encourage any premature speculation upon the results. France herself cannot foreknow them. Both hemispheres will wait with solicitude the great issue of its deliberations.

None of the European diplomatic corps have left Paris, except the Prussian minister. He, it is understood, has not gone away in any unfriendly spirit, and his return is expected soon. None have recognized the provisional government, but all maintain present relations of good intelligence with it, England and Belgium appear-

ing to take the lead; Austria and Russia being more guarded. The governments of the South American States, of the republican form, have, I believe, all of them, followed in the steps of the minister of the United States. Since I last wrote, I have seen Mr. Lamartine; not on official business, having had none at the moment to charge him with, but in his private saloon, where he received me with every cordial demonstration.

A tribute is due to this eminent man, for his extraordinary merit in the recent scenes, which all are paying. It was on Friday, the 25th of February, being only one day after the provisional government had entered upon its perilous duty, that bands of the general description of those I have spoken of, and further stimulated, it may be, by disappointed and daring spirits mixing among them, who had thrown off their own clothes and disguised themselves in blouses, thronged around the Hotel de Ville. Their numbers were formidable; their shouts, their badges, their gesticulations menacing. The provisional government had taken the tri-colored flag as the banner of the new republic. These infuriated bands had come to demand, in its stead, the red flag; the bloody flag of the old revolution. Mr. Lamartine, from the portals of the edifice, announced, on the part of the provisional government, a refusal. Muskets were levelled at him, sabres brandished, denunciations vented forth; but he stood calm and resolved. It was a moment of infinite anxiety. Many thought all was lost, when the minister, stepping forward, burst upon them with the following brief but burning appeal:

"Citizens: You demand the red flag instead of the tri-color, but never will we adopt it. I will tell you why. It is because the tri-color has made the tour of the world, under the republic and the empire, with our liberties and glories; and the red flag has only made the tour of the Champ de Mars, trained through torrents of the people's blood."

The effect upon the masses was electrical; they were quelled. Frenzy was turned into the feeling of national glory by the quick and nople appeal of this one man, whose saving eloquence will ever remain as a memorial of the efficacy of sheer moral power in the human mind over external dangers the most fearful. A grateful admiration everywhere greets this public functionary, whose patriotism is as lofty as his genius, and whose courage rivals both. His circular to the diplomatic agents of France, of the 2d of this month, in effect a manifesto, whilst characterized by a force and fertility of thought, as well as ardor of feeling, to satisfy the ancient pride and present aspirations of France, is yet drawn up with such care, skill and mastership of language as not to authorise offence being taken by any of the European powers, so far as I have yet been able to learn; and so the manifesto stands.

On the suddenness of this great revolution, the better opinion seems to be, while facts are still fresh, that but for the firing upon the people by the troops, on the evening of Wednesday, the 23d of February, before the hotel of Mr. Guizot, which firing was accidental, the revolution would not have happened. Up to that point,

the overthrow of the monarchy had been contemplated by nobody. The people would have been satisfied with a change of ministry and assurance of reforms, including, as chief at first, an enlarged representation in the Chamber of Deputies.

On the extreme suddenness with which the blow fell upon the king, I will conclude this communication, with the mention of an incident within my own knowledge, confirmatory of similar ones, which have been published. I was at the Tuileries on the evening of Saturday, the 19th of February. It was an evening when the king received, in his customary way, members of the diplomatic corps. The secretary of legation was with me. The scene was one of tranquility throughout the palace. On no occasion had I beheld it more so. The queen was in the room, at her usual seat, occupied occasionally as her pastime in embroidery. Most of the royal family were present. The king, in conversation with me, alluded to the pending banquet in Paris, which then had not been forbidden, but was in course of being watched. He said there was no cause of uneasiness, and that order would be maintained. No thought of insecurity could have been in his mind. In less than a week afterwards, not only was his throne annihilated, the throne generally considered the strongest in Europe for his lifetime, but himself a wanderer on the sea coast, seeking, in a disguised habit, refuge in a foreign land.

I have the honor, &c., &c.,

RICHARD RUSH.

No. 14.

Mr. Buchanan to Mr. Rush.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, April 6, 1848.

SIR: I seize the last moment before closing the mail for the New York steamer of the 8th, to inform you that joint resolutions "tendering the congratulations of the American to the French people" upon the success of their late glorious revolution, have passed the Senate this afternoon by an unanimous vote. All previous orders of that body were dispensed with this morning, without a single negative, for the purpose of considering these resolutions, and the result is but an echo of the voice of the American people in favor of the French republic. The resolutions will be communicated to the House of Representatives to-morrow, where I anticipate for them an enthusiastic reception. I think that by the next steamer I shall transmit you resolutions upon this subject, passed by both Houses of Congress, and approved by the President of the United States.

I enclose you a few copies of the extra Union, containing the President's message, your despatch, &c.

Yours, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

Mr. Rush to Mr. Buchanan.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
Paris, April 18, 1848.

SIR: I have had the honor to receive your despatch, No. 11, of the 29th of February, enclosing a letter from the President to the the late king of the French, in answer to one received from him announcing the death of his sister, the princess Adelaide, and instructing me to take the usual steps for its delivery.

It could have been as little imagined when this letter was written in Washington, that it would arrive in France to a monarchy overthrown, as the same thing was at all imagined in Paris up to the 22d of February, and later. The reception of the letter may naturally carry me back to my No. 16, of the 24th of February, dated at 11 o'clock in the morning, which gave you the first intimation from this legation of the revolution. Though not then accomplished, it was in rapid progress whilst I was writing. My subsequent numbers, having done little more than simply mention the total extirpation of the monarchy, with notices of some of the leading measures of the provisional government of the new republic, I will here take occasion to mention the principal events of the three days which brought about this great revolution. The interval gone by may be but more favorable to their brief and calm recapitulation.

It was stated in my No. 16 that the king's ministers had announced in the Chamber of Deputies, on Tuesday the 22d of February, their determination not to let the banquet take place in Paris, which had for some time been meditated. The arrangements for the holding it on that day, had at length been fully completed by the opposition members of the chamber, and others acting in political concert with them. The government had, in fact, prohibited it by public proclamation at the corners posted up late in the day on Monday, and the prohibition was officially and formally announced by the minister of the interior on Tuesday morning, very soon after the chamber met.

Banquets had grown to be the popular mode of opposition to the government. It was to the French taste, and had become their habit. In my No. 6, of the 24th of September, I spoke of one held last July, near Paris, about the time I arrived here. Many others had taken place throughout France, during the summer and autumn, without any interference by the government to prevent them. The king, however, in his opening speech to the chambers on the 28th of December, had a disapproving allusion to them; and the answer to the speech, as prepared by the ministers, echoed and strengthened the king's hostile expressions. The subject produced angry debates in the Chamber of Deputies. The legal right of the people to hold these banquets was unequivocally asserted by the opposition members, and the legal authority of the government to prohibit them as stoutly maintained by the ministers.

This was the state of that fatal question to the king and government on Tuesday, the 22d of February.

The positive prohibition of the banquet roused the feelings of large portions of the people. It became a political topic, intense and absorbing, drawing into its vortex materials highly inflammable. It made a direct issue between the government and the opposition of all classes and shades throughout Paris. There was something to rouse pride, as well as other passions, in thus interposing the strong arm of government to prevent people from sitting down to a table already, in a manner, spread out before them. Freedom of speech and conduct, public spirit, individual spirit, the rights of conviviality, all seemed at stake, in resisting the interdict. It looked like adding insult to a violent exercise of power.

Disturbances being accordingly apprehended on that Tuesday, the government had resorted to measures for preserving tranquillity. They called out the municipal guard (a local force of great efficiency, at that day, in Paris, part of it mounted as dragoons) and regular troops of the line, in unusual numbers. Crowds of people collected in various parts of the town. The troops and municipal guards were stationed at all the important points. Foot soldiers, in regiments and companies, and cavalry, moved rapidly through the streets; and there were all those lowering appearances and preparations which seemed to bode an interruption of the public peace. This happened, to a slight extent, in some parts of the town, especially when the municipal guard acted, in attempting to disperse the people, as they formed a part of the armed force in no popular favor, but the reverse. On the whole, however, that day ended without any serious collisions or bloodshed.

Things looked worse on Wednesday. The crowds had not dispersed during the night. Fresh crowds came up in the morning from the faubourgs, and elsewhere, the ball gathering as it rolled. The people got arms wherever they could, as they had been doing on Tuesday, but still very few were armed, in comparison with the whole. Excitement increased as the numbers increased. Business and work stopped; the shops were more generally closed than on Tuesday; riots took place, and irregular conflicts, the military dispersing the people, and overthrowing barricades which they had raised. They effected their objects chiefly by pushing or pressing upon the people with their muskets, and the cavalry by using the flat of their swords, or the backs; all the troops showing what forbearance they could, except, perhaps, the municipal guard. It now, more and more, got to be disclosed that the national guards were disinclined to act against the people. Portions of them even began to hurra with the people. The latter sought, also, to conciliate the troops of the line by uttering shouts in their favor. It was evident that the cause of the people was gaining, step by step, in the streets. The king was at the Tuilleries. He was kept informed of all these things, and took them as warnings that his ministers must be changed, and that there was no time to lose.

About the middle of the day he sent for M. Guizot, and im-

parted his determination to make Count Molé his prime minister M. Guizot carried this determination to the chamber of deputies forthwith, accompanied by a declaration that he and his colleagues were no longer in power than until a new ministry could be formed.

This news being blazoned forth, the struggle seemed almost at once to be ceasing everywhere. In some places, shouts of joy followed; for reform had been the word, and it was now believed to be at hand; the door was thrown open to it. The opposition, moving with vast masses of the people, had gained the victory. They had triumphed over the hateful interdict against the banquet, by the summary ejection of the ministers who issued it. This was the great aim of all the array of numbers, and zeal, and spirit which had been brought out against the government. The issue was effectually decided in favor of the opposition.

But, suddenly, an opposite turn came to change the whole face of the commotion. The masses were still in the streets. The storm, although at first seeming to be over, left the billows up; and that day was doomed to end in the commencement, and the next to witness the first consummation, of deeds the most momentous of the age, by the consequences to flow from them.

At nine or ten at night a detachment of troops of the line, stationed within the enclosure of M. Guizot's residence to protect it during the day, fired upon the people, and killed and wounded perhaps twenty or thirty. It was confidently said, and continues to be believed, that this firing was owing to some mistake on the part of the officer in command of the detachment.

Whatever caused it, the effect was fatal. The news of it spread like wild-fire, and with exaggerations, unavoidable, under the whole scene of tumult that had been going on. There was no opportunity of explanation; and, had any been attempted, it would probably not have been believed. If the laws have no tongue amidst arms, apologies could have found none. Civil war was renewed, or rather, it seemed only then to begin in earnest. The dead bodies were exhibited in different places, on vehicles drawn about, with lights, to show the wounds and blood of the victims. The people, roused to fury, seemed now bent upon vengeance; their numbers swelling as the fight grew hotter. It was now all battle, and energy, and roar of guns.

Count Molé's efforts to form a new ministry not succeeding, M. Guizot, who continued to hold on until his successor could be found, repaired to the king, at 12 o'clock of this disastrous night of Wednesday. He learns that the king will now have M. Thiers as minister. The king tells him, also, that Marshal Bugeaud shall have the command in chief of the troops.

Two hours afterwards, Marshal Bugeaud, a resolute officer, fresh from the war in Algeria, and accustomed to fighting, reports to the king that he is ready. The troops of the line in Paris, or available in the neighborhood of it, amounted to full thirty-five thousand, with plenty of cannon and everything. With this force, Bugeaud is reported to have said he could destroy the barricades and overcome all resistance before morning. It is understood that he had

surveyed the barricades, or the principal ones, and all the means of attack and defence in the hands of the people.

But before he gets his orders to act, Thiers arrives at the palace of the Tuilleries, between two and three in the morning of Thursday. He says he is willing to obey the king's call, perilous as the extremity had become; but asks for Odillon Barrot to be associated with him in forming a new ministry. The king yielded to his views reluctantly, it is said. M. Thiers, thinking that the people will now be satisfied, Odillon Barrot standing nearer to them than himself, by being a stronger reformer, also says that Bugeaud must not now act against them with the troops. The king consents to this, too, being now in the hands of his new ministry.

As early as practicable in the morning of Thursday, proclamation begins through the streets that Thiers and Barrot, both popular, favorites up to that point, are the ministers. General Lamoriciere, on the part of the king, makes the same announcement, but is wounded on his horse. The two new ministers themselves ride about on horseback, addressing the people at the barricades and elsewhere, that it may be known from their own lips that they were the ministers, and that all would now go right and reform be certain, particularly in enlarging the privilege of voting for deputies in the chambers.

But this movement came too late. Events had got ahead of it. Blood was everywhere boiling. From midnight till daylight the battle had been raging, and the people had the advantage. The national guards would not fire upon them. They even sympathised with them. Troops of the line, called upon to act, showed symptoms of doing the same. The revolution was going on with overwhelming speed. There was no stopping it.

Discouraging reports of all kinds were brought to the king in quick succession. For a while he continued firm. The Dutchess of Orleans put on her riding dress, desiring his permission to ride on horseback through the streets with Odillon Barrot, and speak to the people. This princess was very generally beloved. She hoped good results from her hold upon the favor of the people, supposed to have been created by her virtues and exemplary conduct. But the king withheld his consent to her request. The approaches to the palace were still protected by troops of the line. A considerable body of them, believed to be true, remained posted in the open space in front of it. These he determined to review in person, and did; but the cold reception he met with, and other signs, seemed at last to tell him that his cause was gone. Fresh and more alarming reports reached the palace faster and faster. At length they were to the effect that the people, flushed with success, were resolved to carry everything; that the troops were either throwing away their arms or giving them to the people, and that very soon the palace would be attacked.

Finally, about noon, an intrepid man, Girardin, opposed to the king's cause, but desiring to save him from violence, and the royal family from the terrors of an assault upon the palace, comes hastily to assure him that his cause is irretrievably gone, that the people

are advancing with forces now irresistible, and that all that was left for him was flight or abdication, or both.

It seems believed that the queen put herself against this counsel, but that the two of his sons who were with him, the Duke de Nemours and the Duke of Montpensier, thought it best. In writing and signing the abdication, the Duke of Montpensier assisted in holding the pen for him and guiding his hand, the king being reluctant to the last. He abdicated in favor of his grandson, the Count de Paris, in the fewest words possible.

The rest is known; his flight soon after noon of that day, as the armed masses approached the Tuilleries, with nothing but the clothes he had on and a few francs in his pocket; on foot, and seeking with the queen the first hackney or cab they could get, making the best of their way that night towards the seacoast, destitute of everything. It was the same with the rest of the royal family, except the Dutchess of Orleans. She, leading by the hand her son, the Count de Paris, under ten years of age, and her other son, about seven or eight, escaped through the garden of the Tuilleries, and went, attended by the Duke de Nemours, to the Chamber of Deputies, and also by the Duke of Montpensier.

Thus fell, wrecked and ruined for having forbidden a banquet, the Orleans dynasty. Judged by historic standards of kingly qualities in the long list of kings, it will probably not be pronounced as bad hereafter, as, under the first exultations on its overthrow, appears to have been the case. Its members, scattered by the shock, and flying in different directions, met in a week or two in England, where they found refuge—all but the Dutchess of Orleans, who went into Germany.

The stormy scene that followed in the Chamber of Deputies when the Dutchess of Orleans first went there; the abortive attempt to secure the throne to the Count de Paris, with the dutchess as regent, in whose behalf the Duke de Nemours was ready to renounce his claim to the regency; the total overthrow of the regal government, chambers and all; the announcement of a provisional government; the adjournment to the Hotel de Ville, and proclamation of a republic, all as the work of Thursday afternoon, were mentioned in my number 17, of the fourth of March.

There are surmises, ever to remain only as such, that, had the other two sons of the king, the Prince de Joinville, and the Duke d'Aumale been here, the dynasty might not have fallen. The former, a brave, honest-hearted seaman, and zealous Frenchman, was popular with the masses; and the latter had acquired both experience and reputation in the war in Algeria.

This is an account of the three days, brought within narrow limits. The multitude of collateral facts, with the commentary they might invite, will be for the historian's pen. I aim at presenting you with only a simple narrative of the main incidents. It is drawn up in a slight degree from my own observation, having been in the streets each of the days. All the rest is supported by accounts which I have striven to obtain correctly, sifting them so

as not to make too large a call upon the President's time or your own in the perusal.

The suddenness of the revolution is remarkable. The whole may be considered as the work of twelve or fifteen hours. I cannot learn that it was seriously thought of, if ever thought of at all, by any one before the night of the 23d of February, when the people were shot down in front of M. Guizot's house. Reform had been carried, and would have satisfied the people. It was emphatically their triumph. As then viewed, it was enough to fill up the measure of their exultations. I find this to be the preponderating opinion in all circles. It is difficult to find an exception to it.

Another remarkable thing is the few lives lost, considering the magnitude of the results. There was a great deal of firing, and perhaps a thousand or more barricades erected; but, after all the inquiries in my power, I cannot learn that the killed and wounded, all told, exceeded six or seven hundred. Nor have I been able to learn, though desirous of ascertaining the fact, and making many inquiries in regard to it, that any body was killed prior to those who fell before M. Guizot's house on Wednesday night, though some may have been wounded. The few killed may have been owing to the absence of grape shot, as I believe cannon was not used by the troops, although pieces were in range, including horse artillery.

But the most remarkable feature in the whole transcendent movement is, that a republic should have been proclaimed when nobody expected it. I have not been able to ascertain that even a solitary cry was raised for one before the night of the 23d of February. In my intercourse since the three days with persons the best informed in all circles, I have sedulously sought to find out how large a body the republicans were supposed to be, anterior to the three days, and I have never heard them computed at more than a very few thousand throughout all France. Some estimates stop short of thousands and will count them only in hundreds. All agree the republic took France by surprise. Those who might have been willing to have had a revolution, were not thinking of a republic. This is the sense in which it has come by surprise upon France. Her handful of sincere and genuine republicans, who have been so for years, admit this. So I have found it in my conversations with them.

Yet all parties appear now to agree that a republic must be tried; that destiny has thrown it upon them; and even those who say or think that such a form of government is unsuited to France, find themselves at fault when asked for a substitute; as all have equally to admit, that the experiment of constitutional monarchy has twice and signally failed before the eyes of the same generation. Where grounds for reasoning and judging are apparently so conflicting, men pause. The wisest are slow in trusting themselves to any confident conclusions. Nearly all anxiously wish for a fair trial to the republic, and these wishes will do much towards securing it.

The provisional government continues to stand firm in the midst

of all its formidable difficulties, financial and political. France is so full of genius and knowledge of all kinds, has so much that is profound, and so much that is not, and the mind of the nation is so active, that crude opinions, if not mischievous ones, may be expected to shoot up whilst her institutions remain in an unsettled state, and every body claims to be heard. Great allowances are to be made for her at this immediate juncture. There have been differences of opinion in the provisional government which at times are understood to have been menacing to the unity of its operations, if not to its existence; but they are believed to be lessening, and serious danger from them to have disappeared. The differences are supposed to have arisen on points connected with the interior administration, and largely in reference to arrangements for conducting the elections for the national assembly. This is at present the great subject. All are looking to it, all in movement respecting it. If the provisional government can only hold together until the assembly meets, which now there seems no reason to doubt, it will have achieved wonders, and with as few errors, probably, as would have fallen to the share of any untried men acting under circumstances so new and difficult.

I add, as of importance, that the elections for officers in the newly organized national guard, held early in this month, terminated in the choice of good men very generally, and that the body promises to become an efficient reliance, and indeed has already been proving itself so, for maintaining order. This is an immense gain for Paris and all France, now that the national assembly will come together so soon.

As regards foreign affairs, the great ability, unwearied exertions, and noble firmness of M. Lamartine, keeps every thing straight so far. The volcanic eruption all over Europe served to let loose disorganized elements upon him especially. His trials have been severe. The Irish wanted him for the work of repeal; the emigrant Belgians, at first, to help set up a republic there; the Italians, that he would aid in liberating them from Austrian rule; but having announced that republican France would not be aggressive, he has stood aloof from all, and although not pleasing all, done his duty to France. The Poles, those "French of the north," as they have been called, have been found difficult to deal with. They are probably five or six thousand strong in Paris. Smarting under the long wrongs of their country, they supposed that France, under the restored tricolor flag, would be ready at the start to re-establish Polish nationality. They demanded arms and money, and to be allowed to proceed forthwith to the frontiers of Poland to commence belligerent operations. They pressed upon the new republican minister for foreign affairs. Of course he refused. They would not be satisfied; they came to his salon at night. I chanced that night to be there, it was on the 25th of March. The Polish deputation who came on this errand, fifty in number, had just gone away. I heard that they had been boisterous and rude under his refusal. I heard that they had even threatened a hostile demonstration on the day following, hoping to stir up popular passion in Paris against the

provisional government; and I witnessed his calm resolution. On the day following, he addressed the main body of their countrymen, and in terms so forcible, and with such mingled conciliation and firmness, that instead of a hostile demonstration, he drew from them expressions and manifestations of regret at their unreasonable expectations. Such is Lamartine, such his wisdom, his temper, his statesmanship.

I have the honor, &c.,

RICHARD RUSH.

Mr. Rush to Mr. Buchanan.

[No. 28.] LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
Paris, May 10, 1848.

SIR: The event so anxiously waited for by all France, the opening of the national assembly, took place on the fourth of this month.

About eleven in the morning, members began to enter the building erected since the revolution for the accommodation of the assembly.

Before one—upwards of six hundred had arrived—the body was temporarily organized, and the members in their seats.

Fewer young men were among them than had been anticipated. The majority appeared to be of middle age, above rather than below it, and a portion more advanced.

The members wore no costume, as had been proposed. The whole body had an aspect of great respectability. It was imposing under all views.

Among the members, as the lists show, are names of the first order for intellect and reputation in France.

The Hon. JAMES BUCHANAN,
Secretary of State.

Mr. Rush to Mr. Buchanan.

[No. 25.] LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,
Paris, April 27, 1848.

SIR: I was honored, on the 21st instant, with your despatch, No. 12, of the 31st of March, enclosing me a letter of credence from the President, addressed to the provisional government of the French republic, and expressing his approbation of my conduct in having recognized, as far as my powers extended, the republic immediately after its existence in February.

It is a source of solid satisfaction to me thus to have received the President's approbation, and in the terms in which you have communicated it; nor can I fail to have derived additional gratifi-

cation from the expression of it which he was also pleased to make in his message to Congress of the 3d of this month.

On the day after receiving your despatch, I addressed a note to M. Lamartine to inform him of the reception of the President's letter, and asking an interview, for the purpose of being informed when I might have the honor of presenting it to the provisional government. I enclosed him the official copy of the letter which came with your despatch.

He assigned Monday, the 24th instant, for the interview.

On seeing him that day, it was arranged that I should present the letter to him, as representing, on the occasion, the provisional government.

This course was suggested from the elections being still in progress on the day I called, and other obstacles that might have interfered, at the moment, with the prompt assemblage of all the members of the government.

I was happy to adopt it, both as convenient to the provisional government, under all the circumstances, and as securing the earliest delivery of the letter; the more so, as the convocation of the national assembly will follow so closely after the elections, and as M. Lamartine, in his post as minister of foreign affairs, seemed so peculiarly the organ of the government for the duty with which I was charged.

Accordingly, under this arrangement, I yesterday repaired by appointment to the office of foreign affairs, at eleven o'clock in the morning.

Mr. Martin, late secretary of this legation, now appointed chargé d'affaires at Rome, attended me.

M. Lamartine received me on the part of the provisional government.

The solemnity of the occasion induced me to commit to writing what I said. A copy of it is enclosed on the paper, marked A.

M. Lamartime's reply on the part of the provisional government was also in writing, which he read. A copy of it is enclosed, marked B.

This terminated the ceremony, upon which I can only remark, that nothing could exceed the cordiality of his reception of me.

I did not previously furnish him with a copy of the paper A, deeming a copy of my letter of credence, of which he was in possession, sufficient.

It was my good fortune to have received, day before yesterday, your No. 14, of the 6th instant, in which you inform me that "joint resolutions, tendering the congratulations of the American people to the French people," had passed the Senate on that day by a unanimous vote. You remark that it was but an echo of the voice of the American people in favor of the French republic, adding your expectation that the resolutions would have an enthusiastic reception in the House of Representatives on the day following. This information arriving in an authentic way to me, at a moment so opportune, I could not deny myself the satisfaction of taking your despatch with me to the interview yesterday, and when the

interesting duty I had to perform was over, I read it to M. Lamartine. I need scarcely add, that it very much increased the interest of the occasion. He expressed the greatest pleasure at it, and before I came away, intimated that a copy of it would be acceptable. I did not hesitate to assent, for although you had not instructed me to that effect, its whole spirit and language were such that I regarded its exhibition as an appropriate incident to the presentation of my letter of credence. The latter being addressed to the provisional government, I could see no objection to this auxiliary despatch from you being also seen by the government.

The enlarged reflections embodied in your No. 12, bearing upon the institutions of government which this great nation is so soon to be engaged in the work of establishing, could not have failed to attract my special attention at this immediate juncture. Happy to have been favored with them, they will remain present in my mind, and, in the progress of events here, be called up whenever fitting occasions may present themselves to me for their use.

The elections opened throughout all France on the morning of the 23d of this month, and were closed on the night of the 24th. Results are not yet known in regard to the members chosen to the national assembly. But so far as the mode of conducting the elections is concerned, they have gone off extremely well. In Paris, where probably more than 250,000 votes were polled, they were all taken in with an order and good arrangement very remarkable. In some respects the arrangements might serve as a model. Not the slightest interruption to the public peace, no confusion even in receiving the votes, appears to have happened in any part of this great metropolis. This first step, at least, of the French, has been a good one, in carrying universal suffrage into practice. I witnessed its process in more than one of the voting districts of the city. In none of our large towns, or in any part of our country, could an election have been conducted with more perfect propriety and order than were observed in Paris.

I have the honor, &c.,

RICHARD RUSH.

A.

To the president and members of the provisional government of the French republic.

GENTLEMEN: I have the honor to present to you a letter from the President of the United States, constituting me their envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to the French republic.

In presenting this letter, I am directed to express the sincere solicitude which the President feels for the welfare of France; and to make known his earnest desire to cultivate, with zeal and cordiality, the most friendly relations between the two republics, as conducive to the highest interests of both.

I am also directed to say that he approves my course in recognizing the Frence republic, when its existence was announced to the world by the provisional government in February.

This was three days after its birth. It is now in the third month of its existence. During this momentous interval, when all Europe has been agitated, and France exposed to the heaviest trials, the provisional government has succeeded in preserving the paramount blessings of internal tranquillity and external peace. History will record this great consummation.

I am doubly happy in offering my congratulations on this second occasion, as now I do so under the authority of my government and country; and I pray to be allowed to add my fervent wishes, that when the republic shall have passed from your guiding hands to those of the national assembly, so soon to meet, that great body may crown its labors by the establishment of institutions securing to France the highest prosperity and the purest glory.

B.

[Enclosure.—Translation.]

Sir: The provisional government has charged me to represent it, on this occasion, to receive from your hands the first act of official recognition of the French republic. France was the first to recognize the independence of the American republic when young, feeble, and still contested, but which, under the fruitful influence of the democratic principle, was destined to expand, in half a century, to the proportions of almost an entire continent. By a just return of Providence, it appertained to the American republic to acknowledge first the new French republic, and to set, so to say, its signature to the act of birth (certificate of birth) of French democracy in Europe. This signature, sir, will be auspicious to the republic, notwithstanding the agitations and embarrassments inseparable from such a crisis, from the fall of one form of government, from the creation of institutions totally different, from a great displacement of men and things. Say to your fellow citizens that everything gives the assurance that their aspirations for France will be accomplished, and that the republic will proceed, great and strong, from our feeble hands, to pass greater and stronger yet into the hands of the entire nation. What gives us this assurance, sir, is that the French people are ripe, henceforward, for its institutions. That which, fifty years ago, was but the idea of superior men of the nation, has passed into the ideas and habits of the whole people, without exception. The republic which it wishes now is that which you have founded. It is a republic progressive, yet conservative of the rights, the property, the industry, the commerce, the probity, the liberty, the moral and religious sentiments of its citizens. It is a republic whose first cry was a cry of generosity—of fraternity; which broke, in its own hands, the arm of

(————) vengeance and (political) reaction; which has proclaimed peace; and which, instead of inscribing upon its banner the fatal words of confiscation and proscription, inscribed upon it the abolition of the punishment of death and the fraternity of nations.

These principles, to be adopted, we trust, by the national assembly, strengthened by an invincible public force, of which every good citizen, as you have seen, has constituted himself the voluntary soldier, concentrated in a strong representative unity of government, will make the French republic the glorious sister of the American republic; and it may then be said of the French people, and of the American people, what was said formerly by a man dear to the two countries—the *republic of the two worlds.*

As to the sentiments which the French people return, with sensibility and gratitude, to the citizens and government of the United States, I will express them to you, sir, in a word: "Every Frenchman has for Americans the heart of La Fayette."

Soon after one o'clock, cannon and drums announced the approach of the provisional government. As they entered the vast chamber, all the members of the assembly rose, and, with uplifted hands and joyous voices, welcomed them in, every tongue enthusiastically exclaiming and reiterating vive la republique, vive la gouvernement provisoire! Not a voice was silent. The voices in the galleries echoed back the greetings. I sat in the box or tribune allotted to the diplomatic corps, who were invited to the ceremony.

After the reception of the provisional government, their President, M. Dupont, made a b ief address to the assembly. It was to the effect that the moment had arrived when they were to hand over to the representatives of the people, as the depositories of the national sovereignty, the power with which the revolution had invested them; that they had not hesitated to proclaim to France the republic which sprang into existence in February; that they had passed through difficult circumstances, and now looked, with hope, to the supreme power of the assembly to give to France a republican constitution that would suit her.

The address was enthusiastically received. In every part where the word republic or republican occurred, exclamations burst forth anew of vive la republique, vive la republique; leaving no room for doubt that this is the form of government to spring from the assembly.

The provisional government then withdrew from the chamber, followed by the representatives, who went into their different bureaus for the purpose of verifying their returns under the election.

When this process terminated, which occupied an hour or more, the members of the assembly returned to the chamber, the provisional government also returning.

After attending to a few things of form, a short but animated debate arose on a proposition, by one of the members, that the solemn proclamation of the republic should be made by the national assembly.

Some members objected to this as unneccssary, the republic existing already by spontaneous, unanimous exclamation. It was like the sun; all saw it.

Finally, it becoming known that the national guard outside, and one or two hundred thousand of the people, desired to witness the proclamation of the republic in the open air, the members of the assembly and provisional government, amidst universal and increased enthusiasm, all went out upon the steps of the old Chamber of Deputies, which the new hall adjoins.

There the republic was proclaimed. Shouts ascended to the skies, their reverberations, from both sides of the Seine, intermingling with roar of cannon from the Champs Elysees and Hotel of the Invalids. The day was remarkably fine; the whole spectacle magnificent.

These were the principal incidents of the opening.

The assembly met again on the 5th. Seven hundred and twenty-seven members were present. Proceeding to the choice of officers, the successful candidate for presiding officer was M. Bouchez. He had 390 votes, a majority of the whole. The rest of the votes were distributed among four other candidates. The presiding officer is chosen not for the session, but one month.

Six vice presidents were next elected; M. Racurt, M. Cavaignac, M. Corbon, M. Gainard, M. Cormenin and M. Senars. Six secretaries were also chosen.

Up to this day, there has been no substitute for the provisional government, whose powers ceased when the national assembly met. A difference of opinion has existed in the body as to the mode of creating an executive government until a constitution shall issue from the assembly. It was expected that the point would be determined to-day.

I will forward the Moniteur regularly; the file to be complete from the day the assembly met. This will inform you of the proceedings of the assembly, now and henceforth, the newspaper being official; as well as put the department in possession of all the documents and state papers from the new republic that appear in print.

Several important reports have been made to the assembly by the provisional government and members of the provisional cabinet, which will be seen in the Moniteur, giving an account of the exercise of their powers during the teeming interval since the revolution. Amongst these reports, the one from M. Lamartine on the foreign relations of France, read at the sitting on the 8th, may perhaps most engage the President's attention.

Parties have not yet revealed themselves in the assembly, except in the general outline of moderate republicans, and those reputed to be less so. Of the nine hundred members, about two-thirds are supposed to be moderate. Of this party M. Lamartine is the most conspicuous. Of the other, M. Ledru Rollin is probably at present the most prominent member.

It is thought that there are about thirty or forty legitimists in the assembly. Not one, however, would, at the present epoch,

dream of raising a finger for any other government than republican. The Abbé Lacordaire, the eminent clergyman, avowed this in the sitting, of yesterday. He distinctly declared that before the events of the 24th of February, he was a monarchist, but now was for a republic.

What is to be the form of the new constitution in all its parts and construction, no one yet knows, or can know with any certainty. The tendency, thus far, seems strongly towards a single legislative branch, and plural executive. The tendency to centralization seems equally strong.

When we of America allude to the State governments as the pillars of our republic, there appears to be little or no recipient in French opinion for that doctrine, or any thing analogous to it. It is possible that the progress of debate in the assembly may open a door to its more favorable reception; but the compactness and unity of France, her martial character, the intensity of national feeling all over the country, with her situation externally towards Europe, the latter predisposing her now as much, if not more than ever perhaps, to be ready for war; considerations like these appear to leave her people an ear for little else just now than consolidation. M. Lamartine's report on the foreign relations rather abates than strengthens the hope of a long peace; and the report of the provisional minister of war, made on the same day, shows an army already larger than under the monarchy; namely 500,000 men, and 85,000 cavalry.

The destiny of France, for good or evil, is with the national assembly. The Moniteur will record its proceedings from day to day. I will be observant of them, ready always during the session to add whatever elucidations may seem appropriate, and imparting to you any other events proper to be communicated in the great developments that are going on here.

I have the honor, &c.,

RICHARD RUSH.